

Terror threats pique interest in backup systems

By NICK ANASTASI

WOODBURY – With the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's recent announcement that several buildings used by financial firms have been targeted by terrorists, the need for secondary locations to protect intellectual property and keep businesses running in case of emergencies has again taken center stage.

"We had several calls today," said John Klein, COO of Continuity Centers in Woodbury, on Aug. 2. "Many of our current clients have called wanting to test their servers."

Continuity was established in 2000 as a disaster recovery site for companies. At the time, the possible threats included floods or fire. After 9/11, entirely different threats were recognized.

When it launched four years ago, it had anticipated opening an additional 10 locations throughout the metropolitan region over the next two or three years.

But despite the apparent need for the company's services, Continuity's Woodbury site

remains its sole operation, though the firm is on the hunt for a second location on the Nassau-Queens border to be closer to New York City.

"We have had many prospects," said Gregory Tellone, president of Syosset-based IT provider GTel Networks, which partnered with Continuity last year.

Tellone said the affiliation is part of

an effort to increase Continuity's electronic data storage capabilities, which have accounted for the company's biggest-growing sector. In fact, electronic data storage has far outpaced the use of Continuity's workstations, which are used by businesses that relocate to Woodbury in the case of a disaster.

"We have tripled the size of our server room since we started," said Klein, "and we anticipate doing it again. It's the most pressing requirement of our clients."

Manhattan-based companies that have used Continuity's data services after 9/11 include the law firm of Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel, Security Training Corp. and Banco Espanol DiCredito. Those firms opted to use Continuity's backup capabilities via its servers but were not affected directly by the attacks. But two companies from 2

World Trade Center, Frankel & Co. and Weatherly Securities Corp., used all of Continuity Center's facilities, including the workstations, to keep their respective businesses operating.

Tellone said a proactive marketing approach of Continuity's services is beginning to generate greater client interest, but most companies still need convincing.

"They need to know they need this



John Klein

service," said Tellone.

To date, the company has played host to eight successful business recoveries, including the Huntington Chamber of Commerce, which suffered a fire in March 2001.

"It's so important that a company have a backup plan of operation in case of emergency," said Huntington Chamber President Denis Sneden. "We didn't miss a day."

Tom Abruzzo, president of Merrick-based Tamp Computer Systems, which specializes in disaster recovery and business continuity planning software, said that companies, in the wake of 9/11, have greater risk awareness when planning for disaster recovery.

"They see the need for a plan if indeed something happens," said Abruzzo, estimating that 90 percent of all companies are now backing up their mission-critical data on alternate servers, though those may not be at alternate locations. But far fewer of those companies – from 25 percent to 30 percent – have a dark office, or alternate address, in case of emergency.

"Once a company realizes the need to relocate its data, the next question is what you're going to do with your people," said Abruzzo.

That's where companies like Continuity come into play. Despite concentrating on data storage, Continuity maintains 7,000-square-foot work center on Woodbury Road. And the 24-hour center still provides more than 100 workstations.

